United Nations A/C.5/56/23

General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 December 2001

Original: English

Fifty-sixth session
Fifth Committee
Agenda items 12 and 123

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

Office of the President of the Economic and Social Council

Programme budget implications of draft decision A/C.2/56/L.6

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. At its 30th meeting, on 21 November 2001, the Second Committee adopted, without a vote, draft decision A/C.2/56/L.6. The Committee was orally informed that the potential programme budget implications of the draft resolution were the same as those contained in document E/2001/L.47/Rev.1, which was submitted to the Economic and Social Council on 23 October 2001 in relation to Council draft decision E/2001/L.45/Rev.2.

2. The document submitted to the Economic and Social Council (E/2001/L.47/Rev.1) described two alternative arrangements for providing the Economic and Social Council with the means to carry out its important functions.

3. The Second Committee did not make any recommendation as to which of the alternative arrangements might best suit the needs of the situation. It was the understanding of that Committee that the arrangements would be referred to the Fifth Committee for its consideration. In order to facilitate the work of the Fifth Committee, the arrangements for providing the President of the Economic and Social Council with the means to carry out its important functions are described below.

Draft decision A/C.2/56/L.6

4. Under the terms of draft decision A/C.2/56/L.6, the General Assembly would decide that the Office of the President of the Economic and Social Council should be provided with the means to carry out its important functions, taking into account the different arrangements made for the principal organs of the United Nations listed in Article 7, paragraph 1 of the Charter.

5. In view of the nature and functions of the Office of the President of the Economic and Social Council, only the arrangements made for the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Security Council could be used as models. The arrangements for the other principal organs of the United Nations listed in Article 7, paragraph 1, of the Charter would not be applicable.

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6. The alternative arrangements based upon practices of the General Assembly and the Security Council, respectively, are as follows:

(a) Should arrangements for the President of the Economic and Social Council be modelled on those accorded to the President of the General Assembly, a provision would be required to cover the cost of official travel of the President; members of the Bureau, acting on behalf of the President; and official hospitality and miscellaneous expenses that may be required for the accomplishment of the President's official function. The amount involved is estimated at $125,000 annually and is presented, having due regard to the characteristics of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, which each have a different composition and a different pattern of meetings;

(b) Should the arrangements for the President of the Security Council be adopted as a model for the President of the Economic and Social Council, there would be no direct financial implications as requirements for the President of the Security Council are met through ad hoc arrangements whenever they arise.

7. Information reflecting the provisions for the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council is provided in the annex to the present document.

Action required by the Fifth Committee

8. The Committee is requested to determine which of the possible alternative arrangements is the most appropriate and then to inform the General Assembly as to whether the adoption of draft decision A/C.2/56/L.6 would involve financial implications.

Annex

A. President of the General Assembly

1. The provisions for the President of the General Assembly were made in General Assembly resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997, on the strengthening of the United Nations system. In paragraph 1 of that resolution, the Assembly adopted the text contained in the annex to the resolution, for implementation effective from 1 January 1998. In paragraph 44 of the annex, regarding the role of the President of the General Assembly, it is stated, inter alia, that in order to assist the President in the discharge of his responsibilities, the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General, after consultation with the President, to include in the next programme budget, proposal for adequate resources to be made available to the President.

2. Accordingly, in the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, on United Nations reform: measures and proposals (A/52/303 and Add.1), an amount of $250,000 for each year of the biennium was proposed to supplement the level of support then provided to the President of the Assembly. In its resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997, the Assembly, inter alia, concurred with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions; and decided to approve the level of resources proposed by the Secretary-General. Since the adoption of resolution 52/220, consistent with the approved programme budget, the President of the Assembly has had full authority to use the funds appropriated by the Assembly for each biennium, for the accomplishment of his official responsibilities. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 incorporates a provision of $516,400 for the President of the General Assembly.

B. President of the Security Council

3. As to the President of the Security Council, no provisions are made in the programme budget for each biennium. Requirements for the President of the Security Council are met through ad hoc arrangements whenever they arise.